REMARKS

Applicants have amended the claims to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the present invention. The amendment to claim 1 is supported throughout the specification, see particularly page 16. Claims 2, 3, 4, and 7-10 have been amended to conform with the amendment to claim 1. Claim 5 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Claim 15 has been amended to correct a typographical error. The amendments therein are supported throughout the specification, see particularly pages 15 and 16. Claim 16 is supported in the specification at pages 14 through 15. As such, these amendments do not constitute new matter and their entry is respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended the specification to correct some typographical errors. These amendment are clear from the context.

Claims 1, 7 through 10 and 14 through 15 were rejected pursuant to 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Gottlinger et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn for the following reasons.

The retroviral vector system described in Gottlinger explicitly requires a functional integrase gene, see column 5, lines 54-65. Therein the specification teaches that the Gottlinger vector system has nucleic acid sequences encoding the proteins necessary for reverse transcription and **integration**. Gottlinger is looking at the discovery that matrix protein is not necessary. Thus, the majority of the Examiner's citations for the vector system of Gottlinger are taken out of context. The non-functional integrase described in Gottlinger is used as a control. Further, as shown in Figures 7A-7D and the discussion thereon the vector with Asp 116 Ala mutation in the integrase coding region that did result in the transfer of the target gene. This is explicitly taught at column 22, line 17 through 23 wherein it is stated that the transfer of CAT activity was blocked by a single amino acid substitution in integrase which destroyed integrase

activity. Thus, applicants respectfully submit that the claimed vector system is not anticipated by Gottlinger as the claims were originally worded because that vector system does not teach a vector system having an episomal replicon.

Further the amendments to claims 1 and 15 and the claims dependent thereon have completely obviated this rejection.

Claims 1 through 15 were rejected pursuant to 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to claim 1 which specifies that the packaging vector contains at least the viral DNA origin of replication of the episomal replicon has obviated the rejection of claim 1 and claims dependent thereon.

Claim 15 now specifies that the packaging vector contains the complete episomal replicon.

Applicants have corrected the typographical errors noted in the specification as well as that in the claims.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's implicit acknowledgement that there is no prior art rejection of claims 2-6, 11 and 13.

Applicants respectfully submit that in view of the foregoing all claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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